



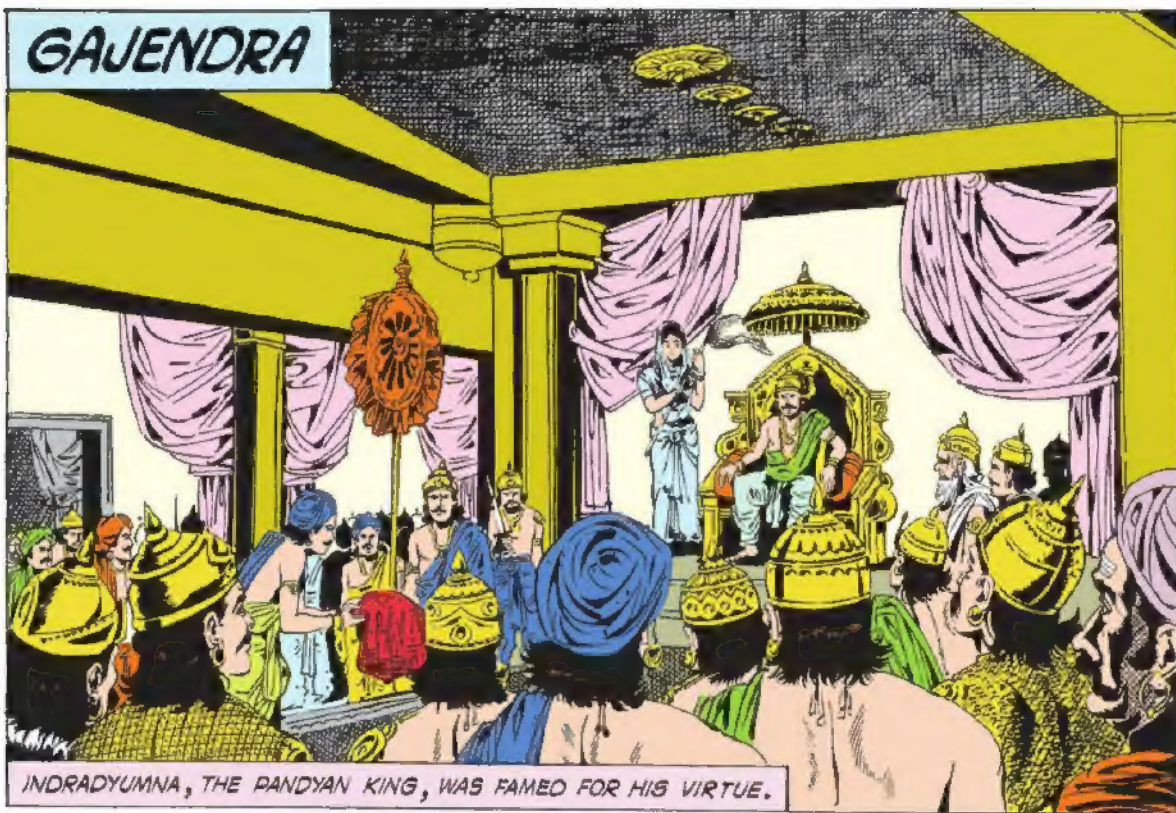
TALES OF VISHNU

THE GENTLE GOD

Vol 512



GAJENDRA



INDRADYUMNA, THE PANDYAN KING, WAS FAMED FOR HIS VIRTUE.

ONE DAY, HE CALLED A MEETING OF HIS COUNSELLORS.

I HAVE DECIDED TO RETIRE TO THE FOREST AND DEVOTE ALL MY TIME TO THE WORSHIP OF THE LORD.

BUT, YOUR MAJESTY... THE KINGDOM...



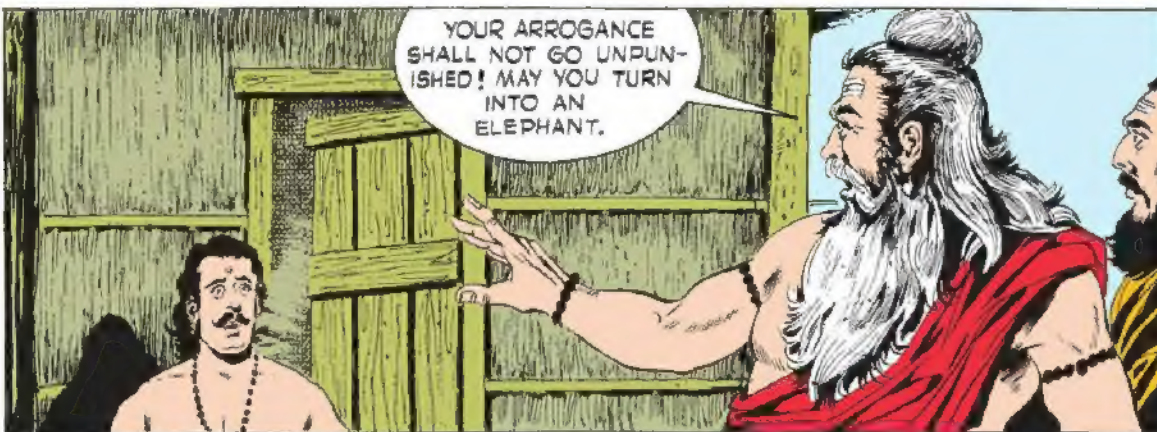
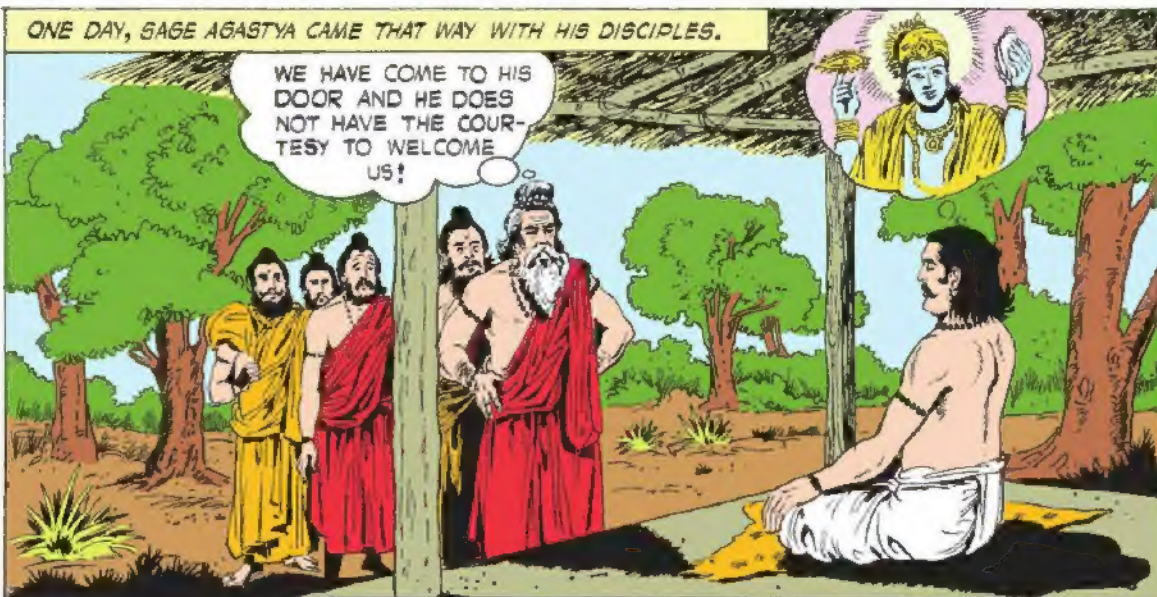
DON'T TRY TO STOP ME. I AM CONFIDENT THAT YOU CAN AND WILL TAKE CARE OF THE KINGDOM.



INDRADYUMNA THEN RETIRED TO THE KULACHALA MOUNTAINS WHERE HE BUILT A COTTAGE FOR HIMSELF, OBSERVING THE VOW OF SILENCE, HE SAT WITH HIS MIND DWELLING UPON LORD VISHNU.



ONE DAY, SAGE AGASTYA CAME THAT WAY WITH HIS DISCIPLES.

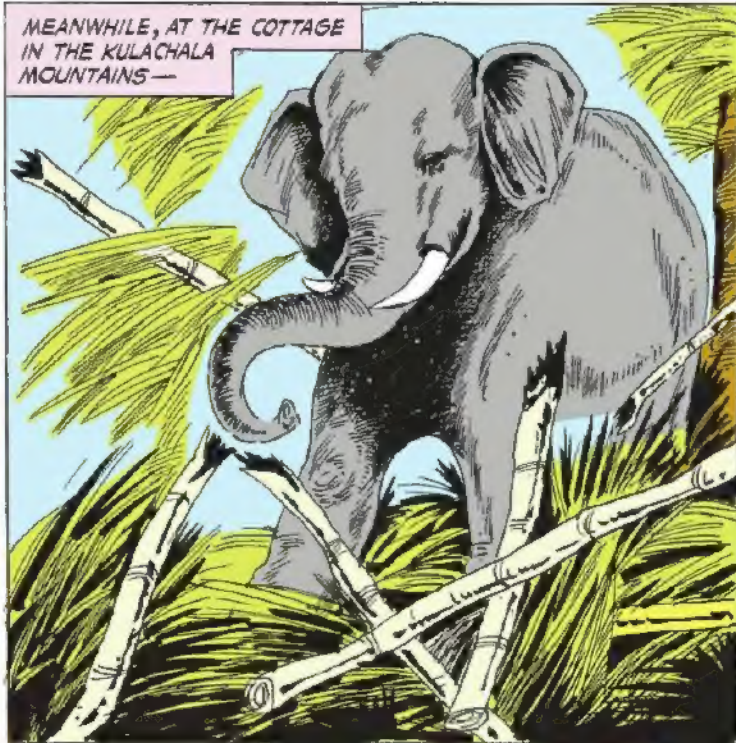


IN HIS CELESTIAL ABODE, LORD VISHNU SMILED WHEN HE HEARD THE CURSE OF AGASTYA.

AGASTYA, YOU HAVE
UNKNOWNLY DONE
MY DEVOTEE A
GREAT SERVICE!

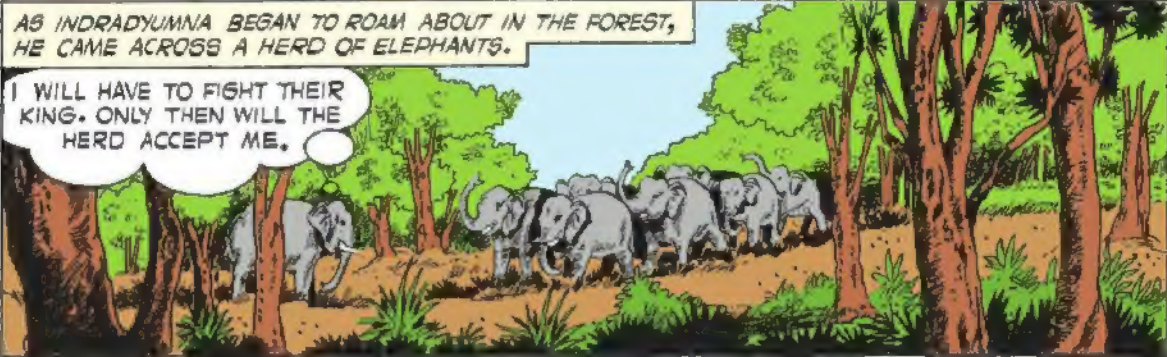


MEANWHILE, AT THE COTTAGE
IN THE KULACHALA
MOUNTAINS—

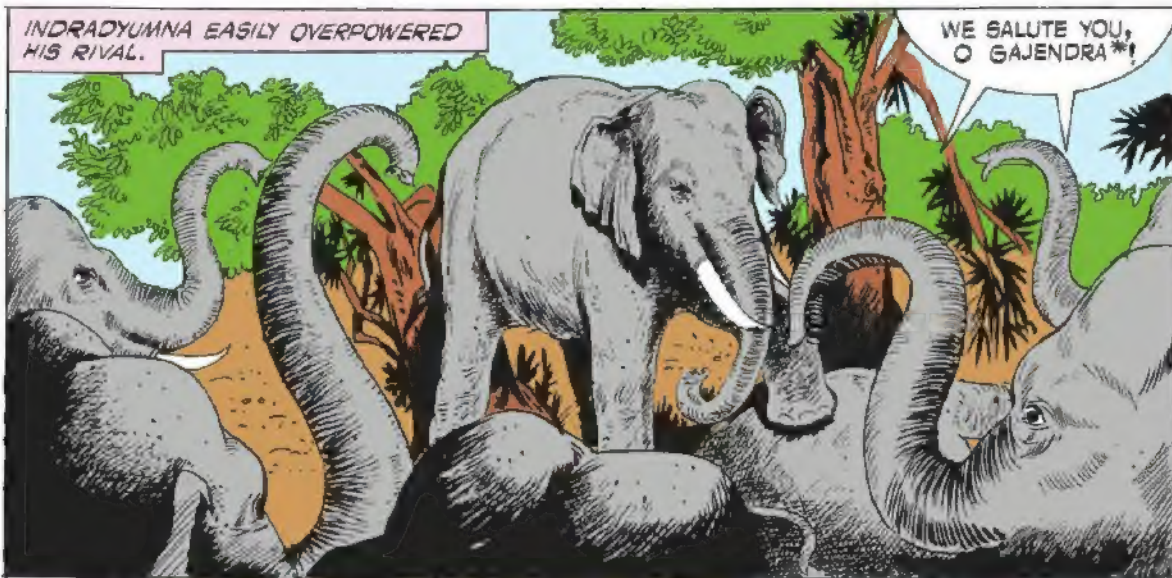


AS INDRADYUMNA BEGAN TO ROAM ABOUT IN THE FOREST,
HE CAME ACROSS A HERD OF ELEPHANTS.

I WILL HAVE TO FIGHT THEIR
KING. ONLY THEN WILL THE
HERD ACCEPT ME.



INDRADYUMNA EASILY OVERPOWERED
HIS RIVAL.



WE SALUTE YOU,
O GAJENDRA*!

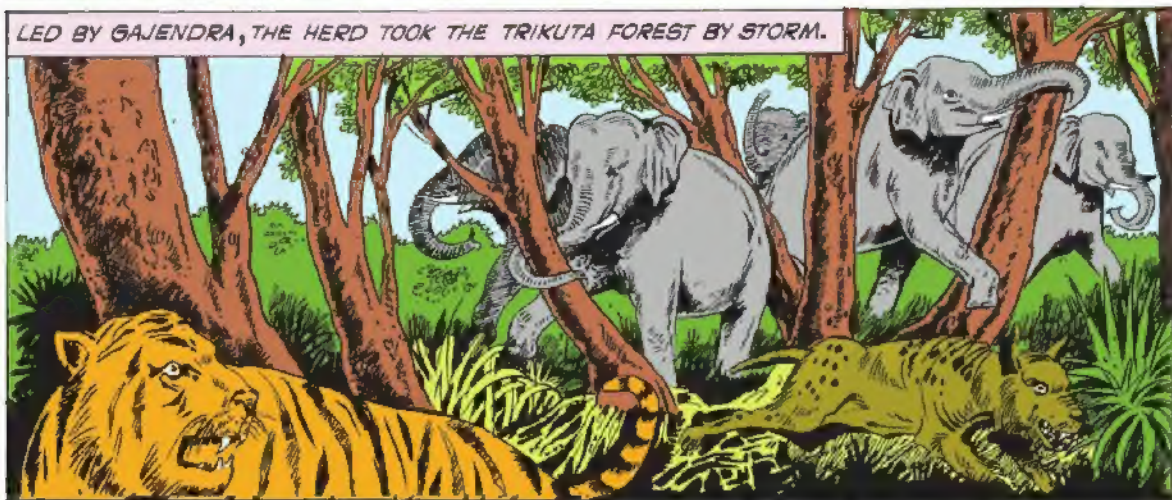
ONE DAY —

LET US
GO TO THE TRIKUTA
MOUNTAIN. IT'S A
BETTER PLACE THAN
THIS.

WE'LL FOLLOW
YOU TO THE END OF THE
EARTH, O GAJENDRA.

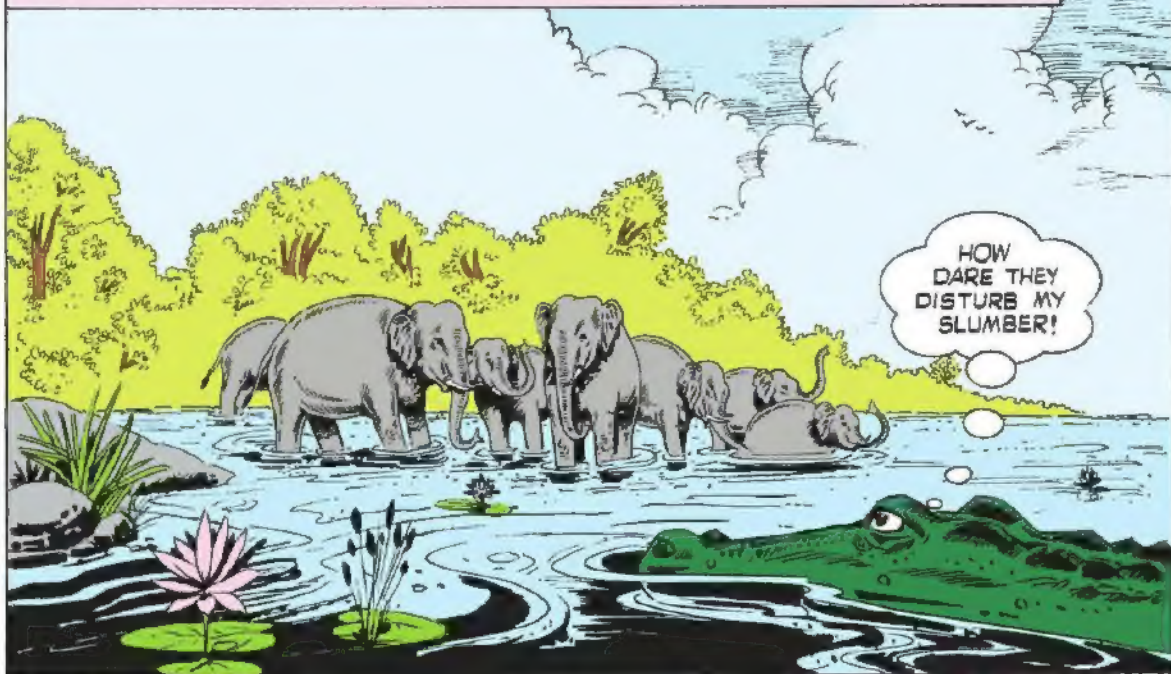


LED BY GAJENDRA, THE HERD TOOK THE TRIKUTA FOREST BY STORM.

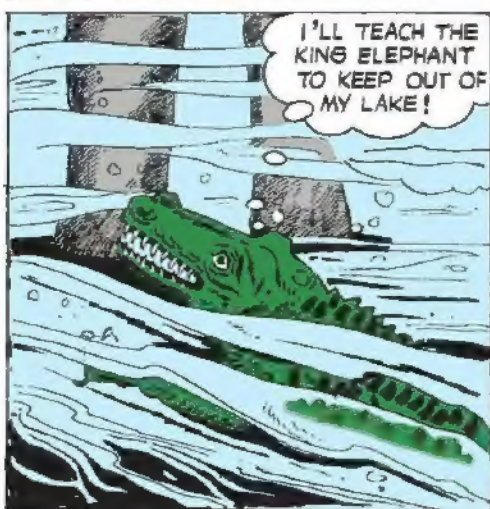


* KING ELEPHANT

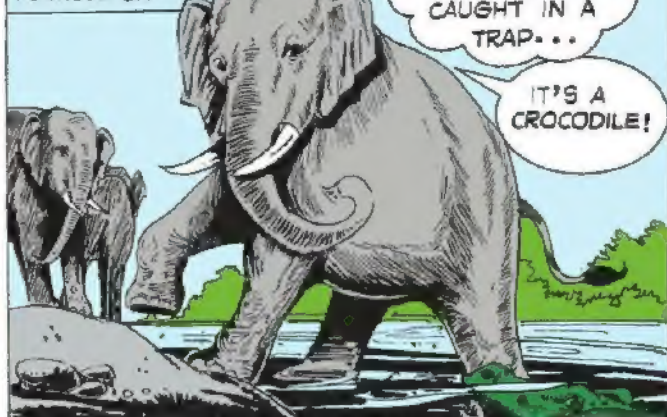
THE ELEPHANTS THEN ENTERED A LAKE, WHICH WAS THE ABODE OF A CROCODILE.



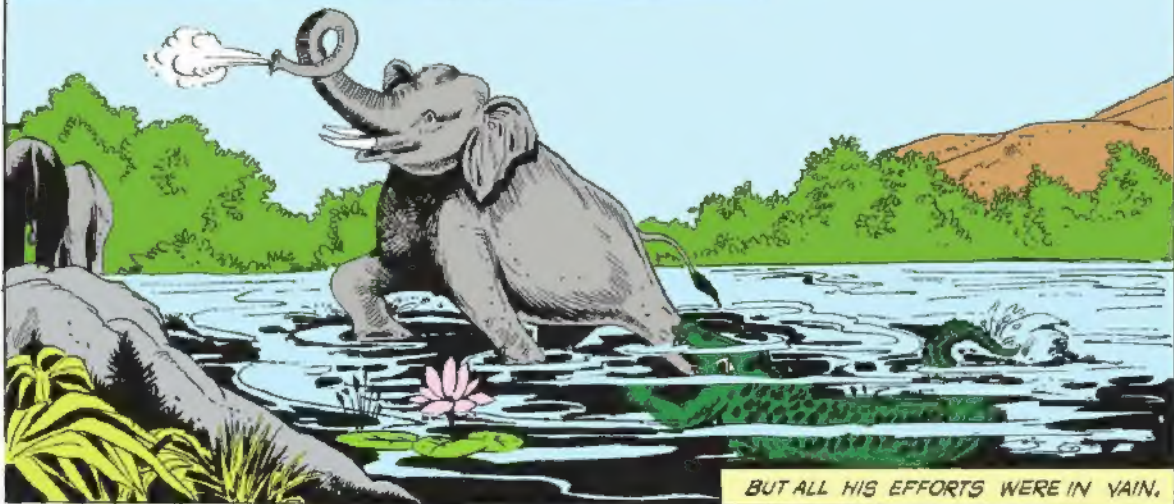
THE FURIOUS CROCODILE BEGAN TO SWIM TOWARDS GAJENDRA.



MEANWHILE, AFTER THE REFRESHING BATH, AS THE ELEPHANTS BEGAN TO MOVE ON—



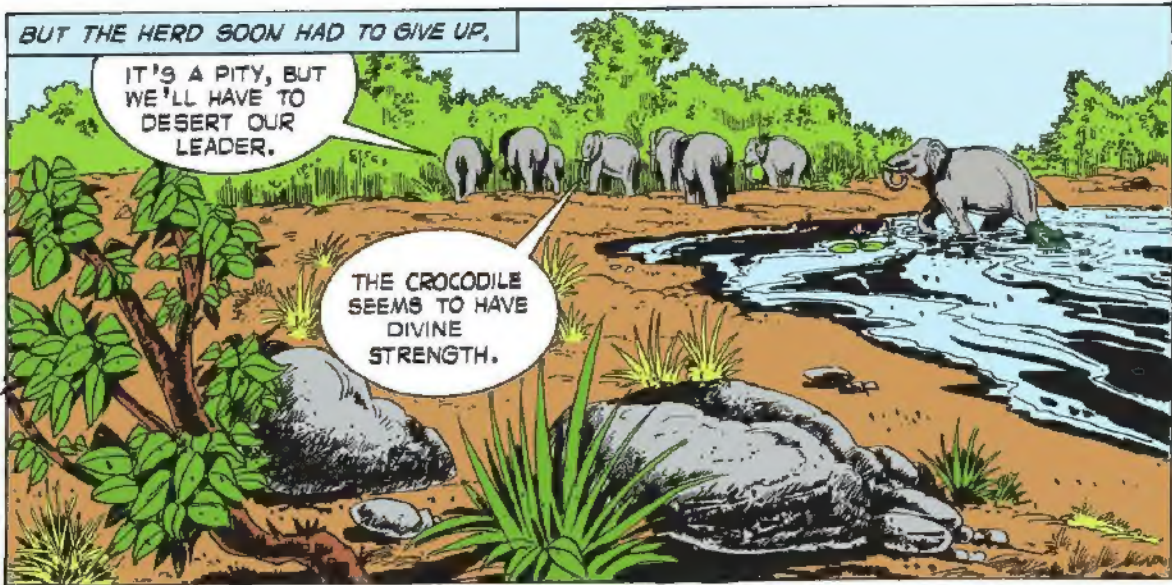
TRUMPETING LOUDLY, HE TRIED TO SHAKE OFF THE CROCODILE.



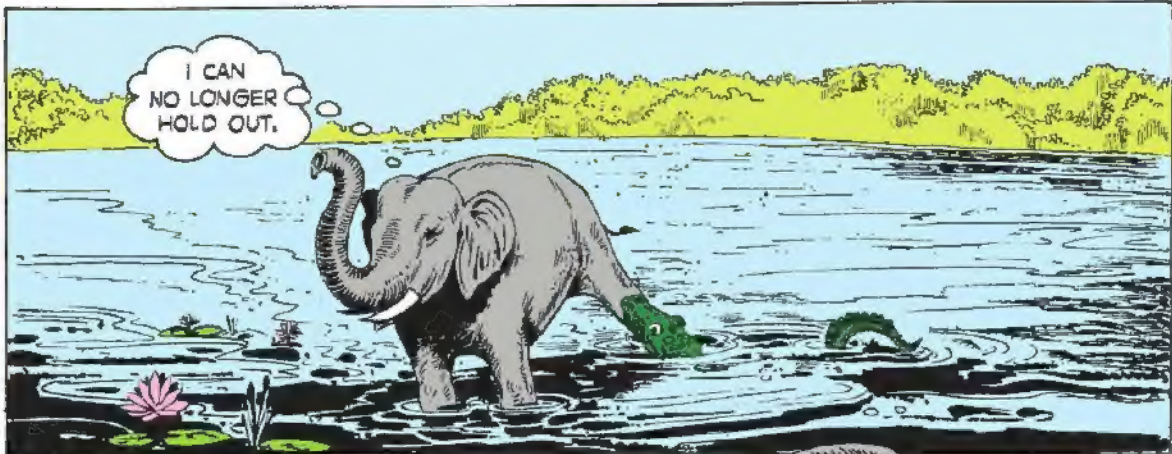
BUT THE HERD SOON HAD TO GIVE UP.

IT'S A PITY, BUT
WE'LL HAVE TO
DESERT OUR
LEADER.

THE CROCODILE
SEEMS TO HAVE
DIVINE
STRENGTH.

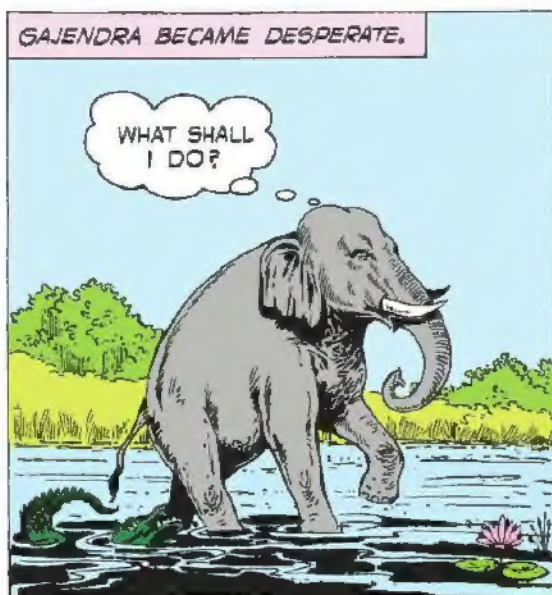


I CAN
NO LONGER
HOLD OUT.



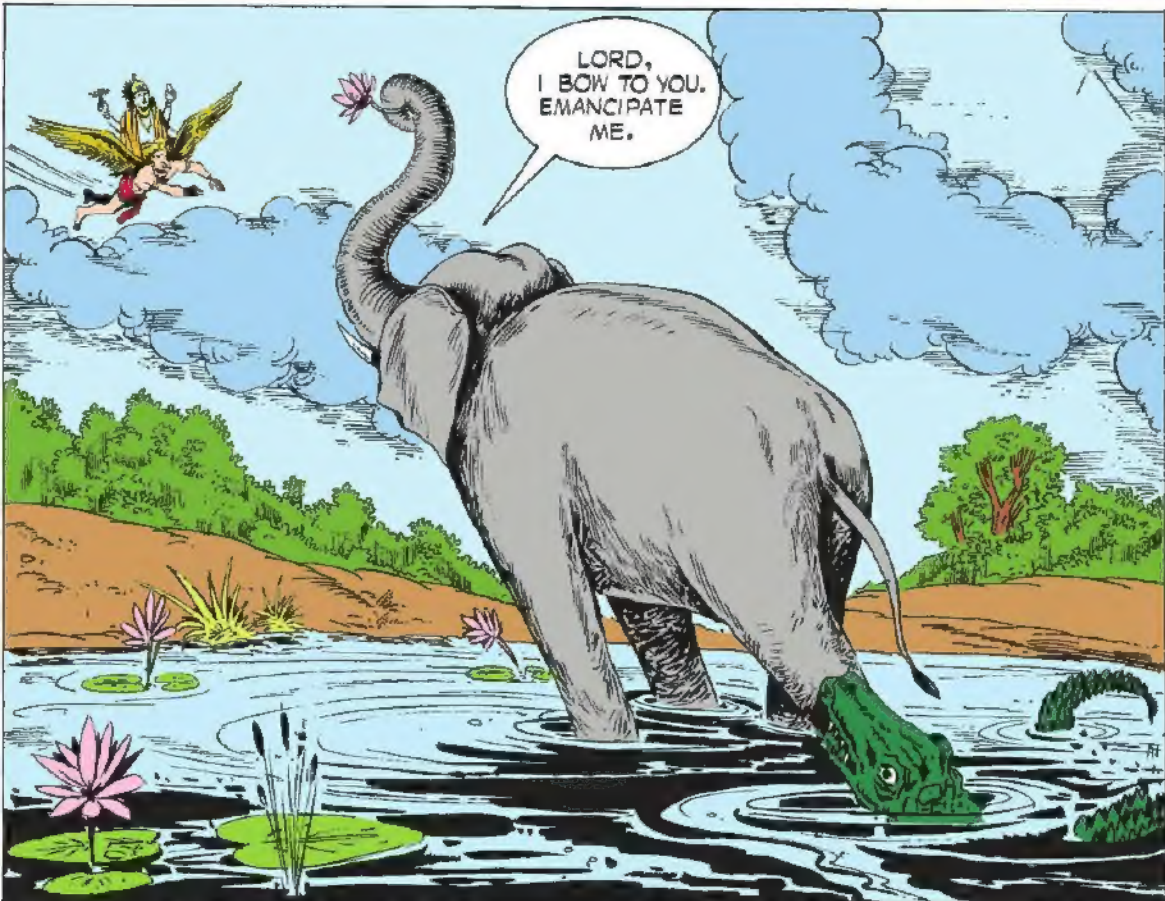
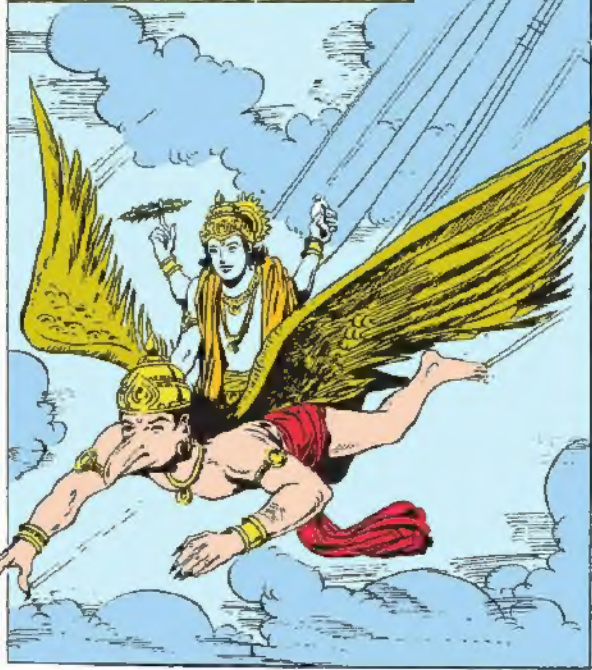
GAJENDRA BECAME DESPERATE.

WHAT SHALL
I DO?



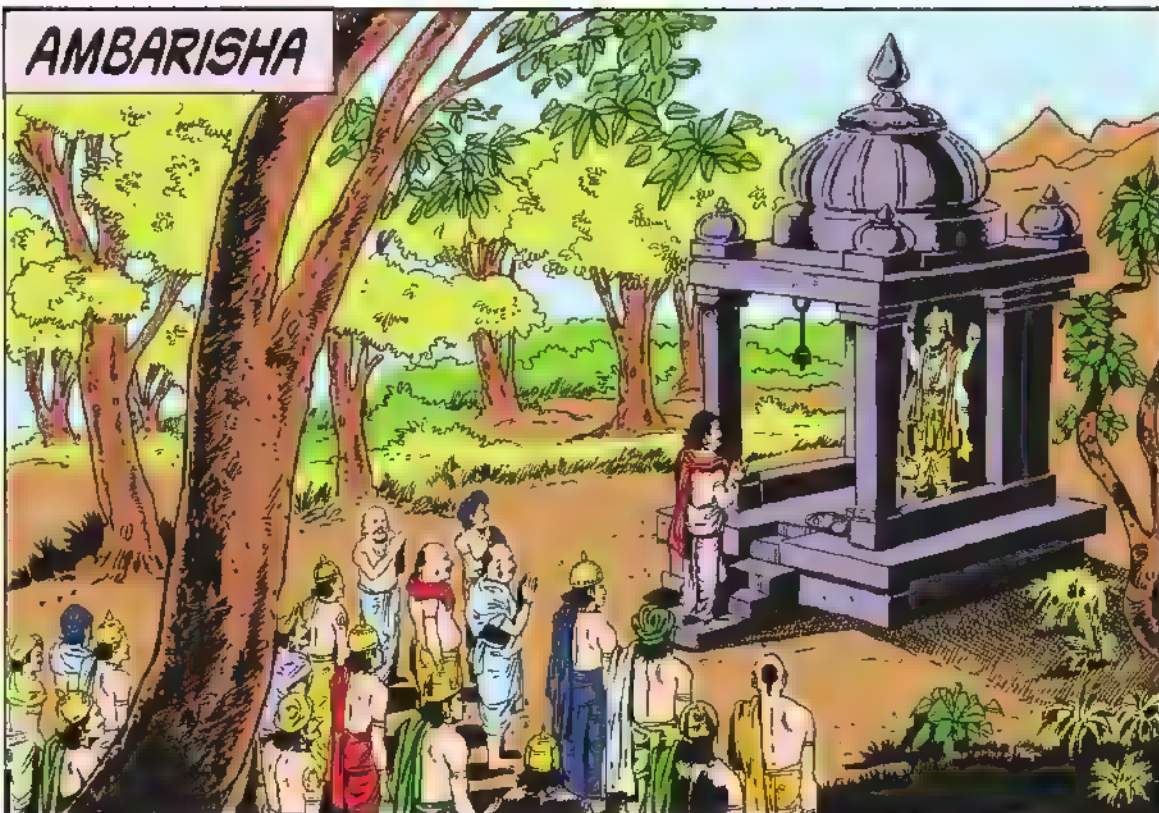


VISHNU HEARD THE PRAYER. MOUNTING GARUDA,
HE LEFT HIS ABODE, VAIKUNTHA.



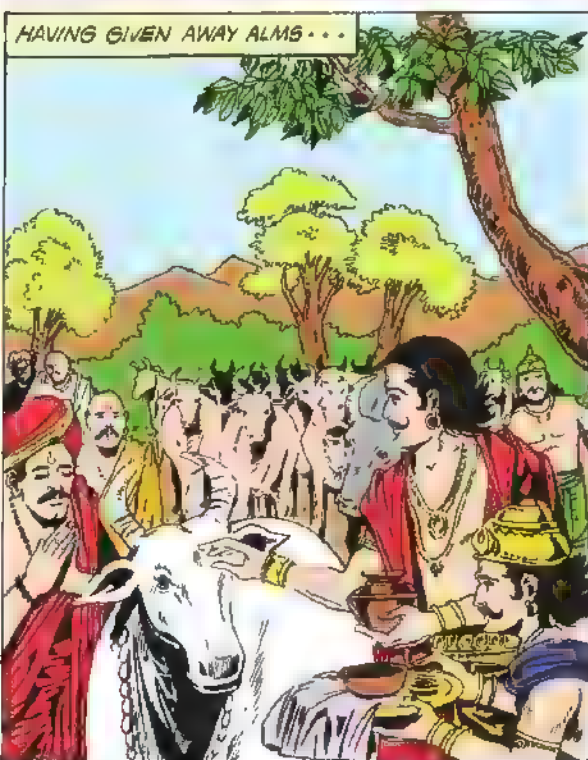


AMBARISHA

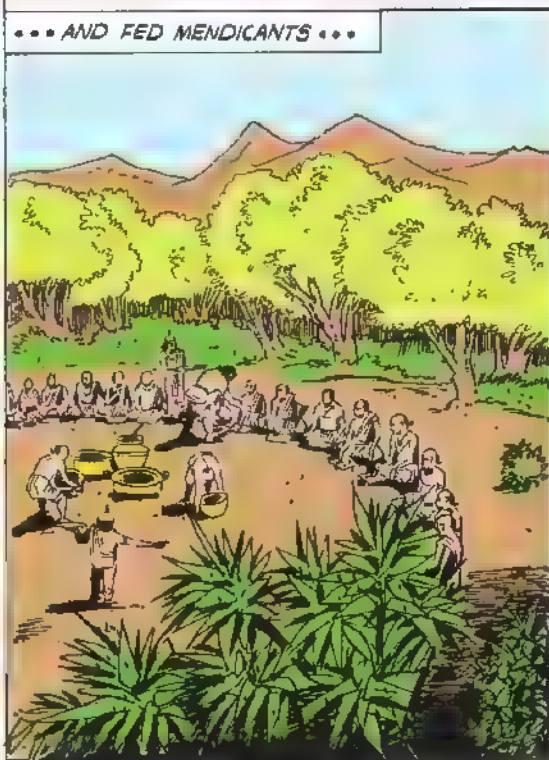


AFTER FASTING FOR THREE DAYS, KING AMBARISHA WORSHIPPED LORD VISHNU IN THE FOREST OF MADHUVANA*. HE WAS TO BREAK HIS FAST ON THE AUSPICIOUS DAY OF DWADASHI.†

HAVING GIVEN AWAY ALMS...

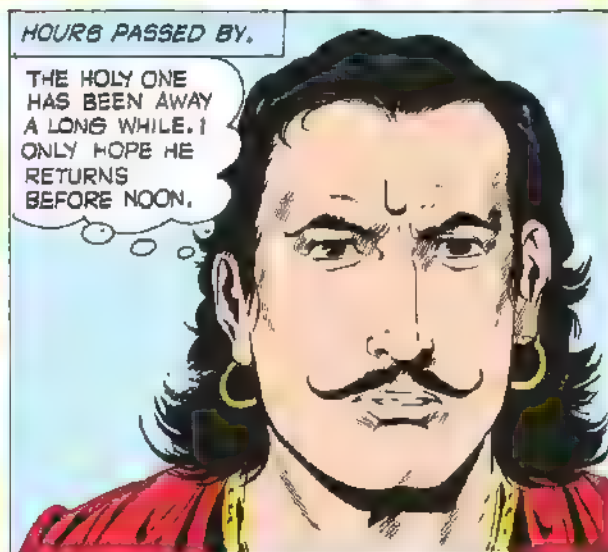
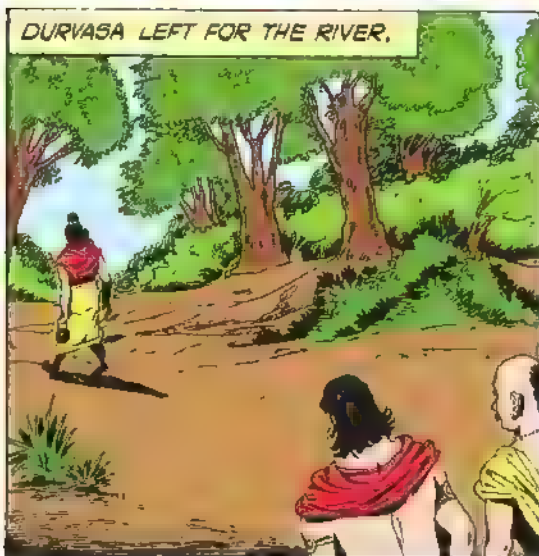
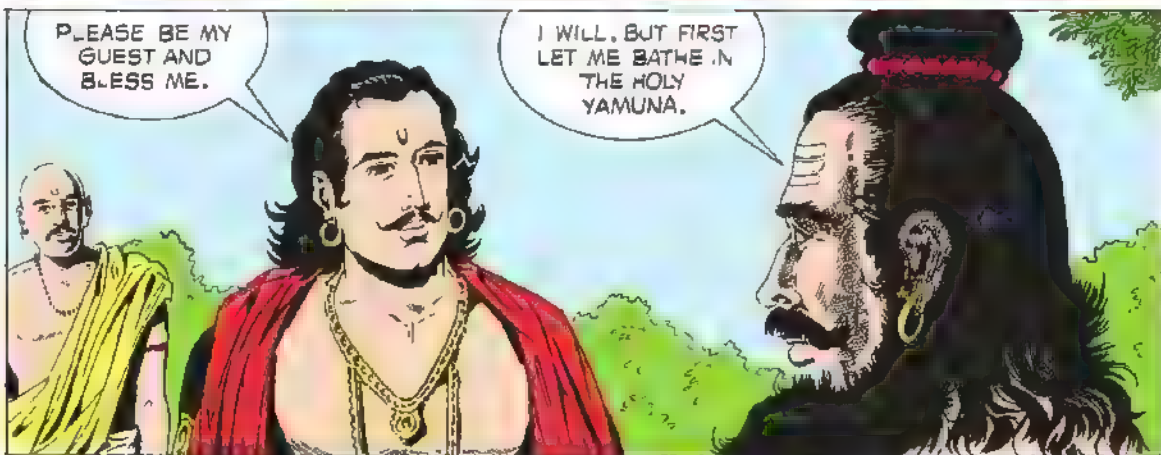
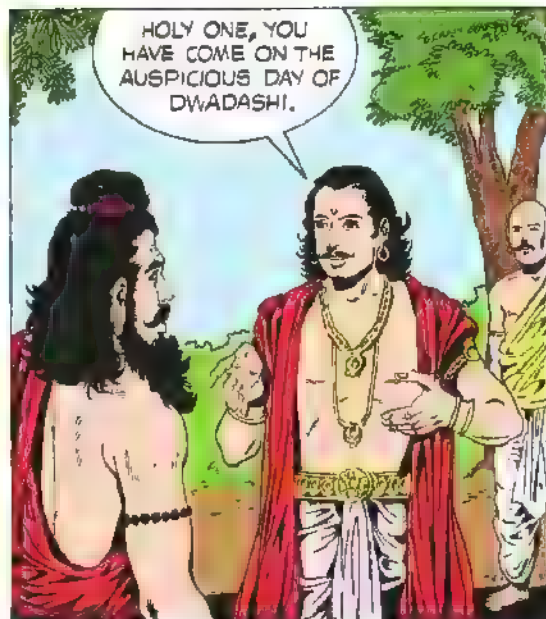
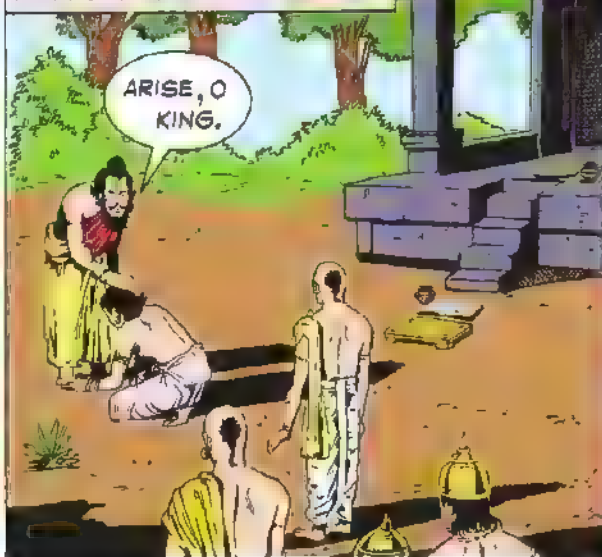


...AND FED MENDICANTS...

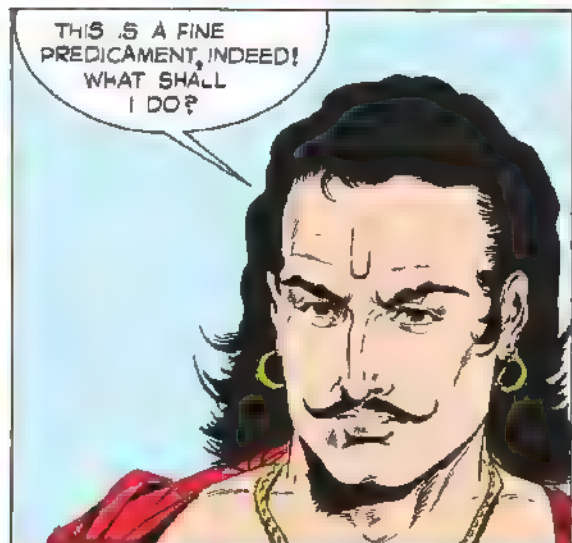


*THE FOREST REGION AROUND MATHURA †THE TWELFTH DAY OF THE FORTNIGHT

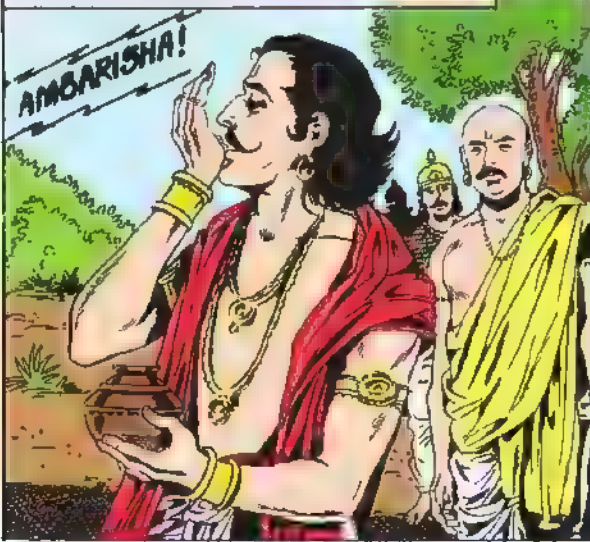
... HE HIMSELF WAS ABOUT TO BREAK HIS FAST WHEN SAGE DURVASA CAME BY.



THE LEARNED MEN WHO HAD ASSEMBLED THERE, WERE WORRIED.

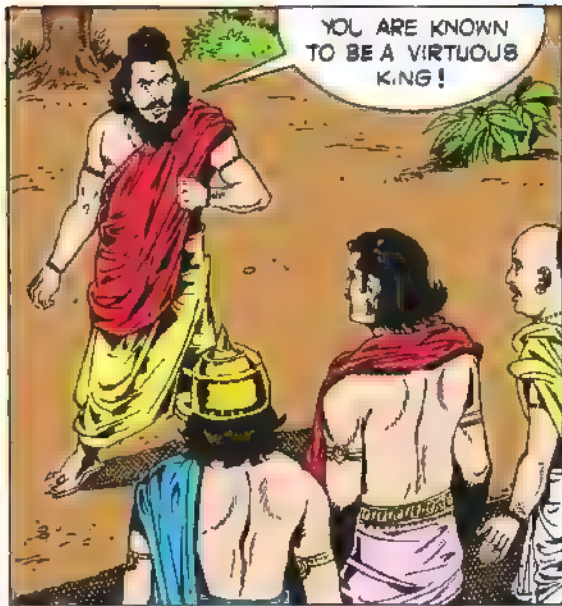


AS AMBARISHA POURED A LITTLE WATER INTO HIS PALM AND RAISED IT TO HIS LIPS —

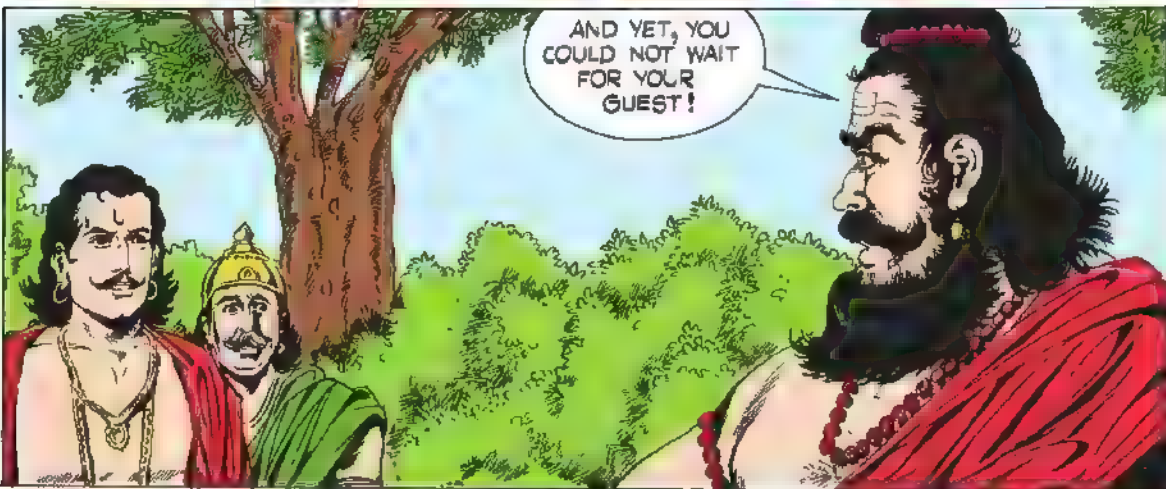


AMBARISHA!

YOU ARE KNOWN
TO BE A VIRTUOUS
KING!



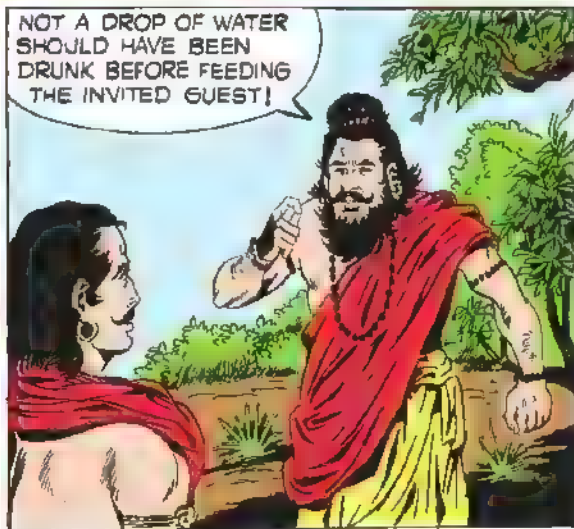
AND YET, YOU
COULD NOT WAIT
FOR YOUR
GUEST!



HOLY SAGE, I
HAVE ONLY TAKEN
A SIP OF WATER.
I HAD TO,
OTHERWISE...



NOT A DROP OF WATER
SHOULD HAVE BEEN
DRUNK BEFORE FEEDING
THE INVITED GUEST!



THE COURTIER'S WERE AGHAST.

ISN'T THE SAGE
AWARE OF THE CONDI-
TIONS LAID DOWN FOR
THE BREAKING OF
THIS FAST?

WHY DID HE
KEEP OUR KING
WAITING?

DON'T WORRY.
I THINK HE WILL
SOON GET OVER
HIS FIT OF RAGE.



BUT THE COURTIER WAS IN FOR A SHOCK. THE NEXT MOMENT—

YOU SHALL PAY FOR
YOUR ARROGANCE,
AMBARISHA!



THE SAGE TORE OFF A LOCK OF HIS MATTED
HAIR.



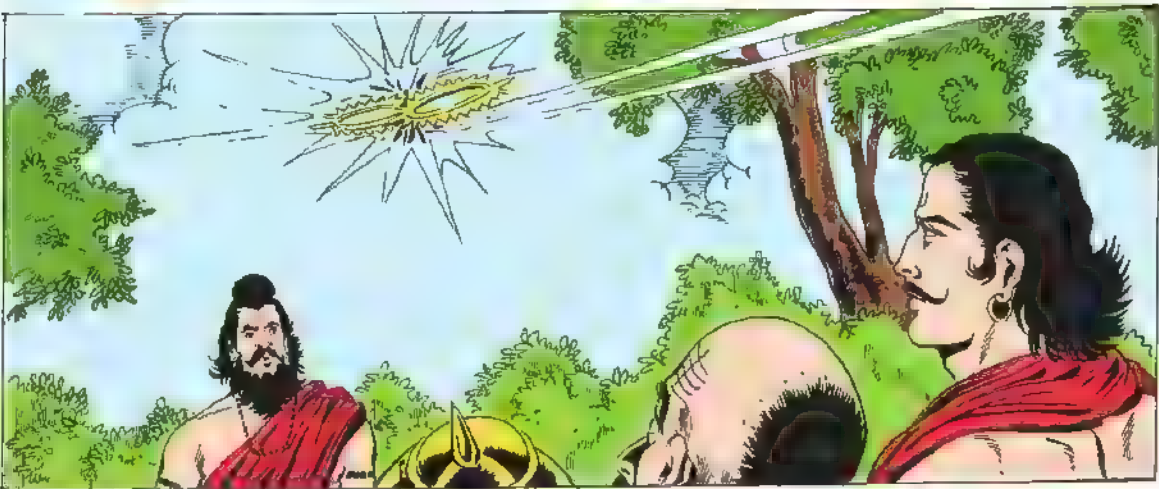
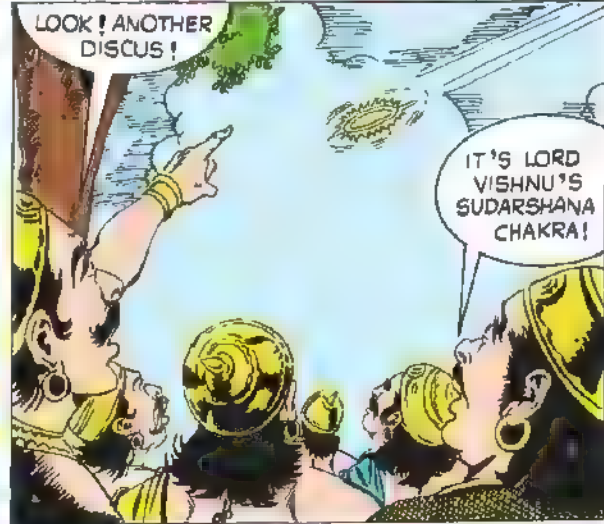
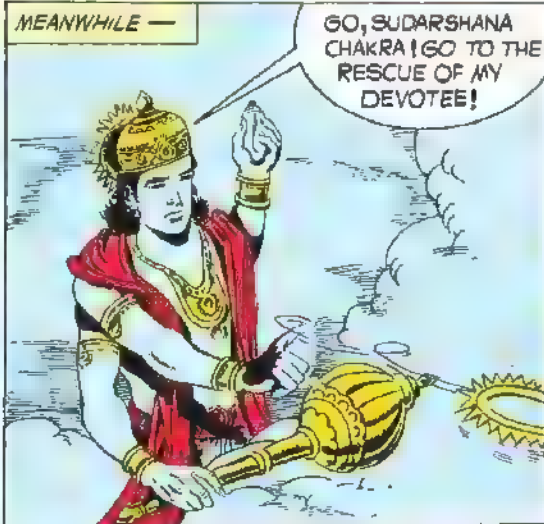
AND LO! IT TURNED INTO A
DISCUS.



AS IT CAME WHIRRING
TOWARDS AMBARISHA—



MEANWHILE —



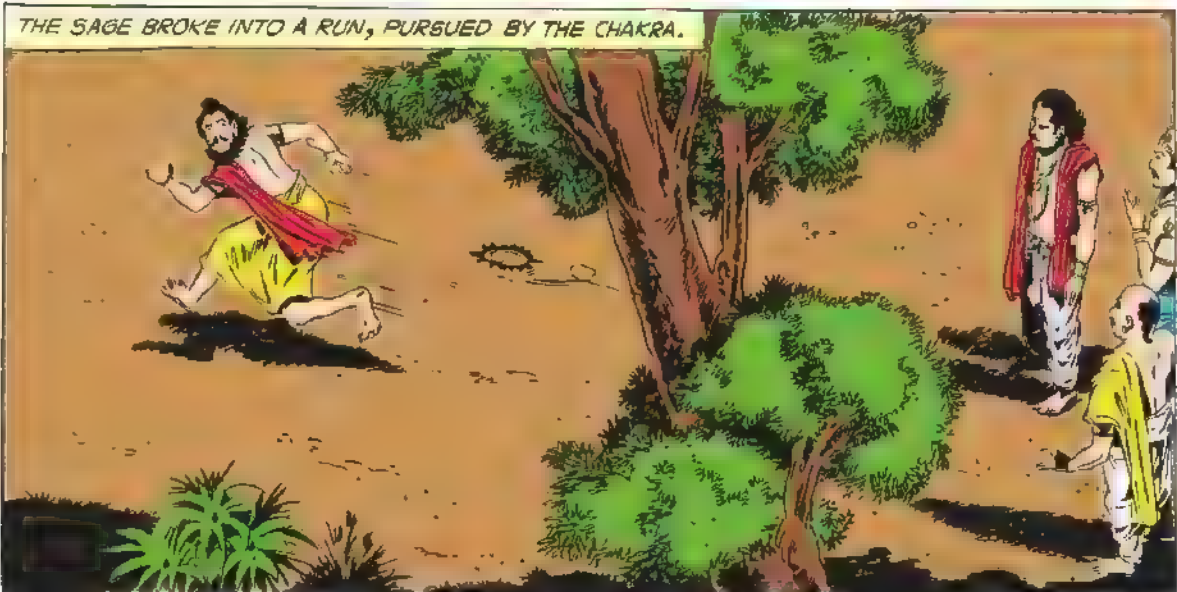
HAVING DESTROYED THE DISCUS WHICH THREATENED AMBARISHA'S LIFE, SUDARSHANA CHAKRA FLEW TOWARDS DURVASA.



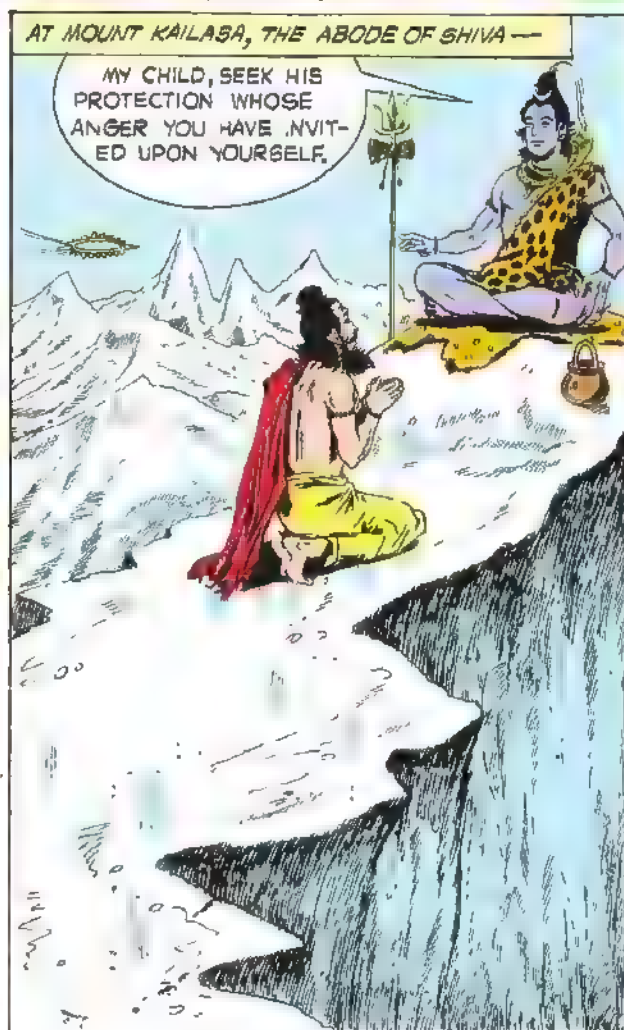
IT'S HEADING
FOR ME!



THE SAGE BROKE INTO A RUN, PURSUED BY THE CHAKRA.







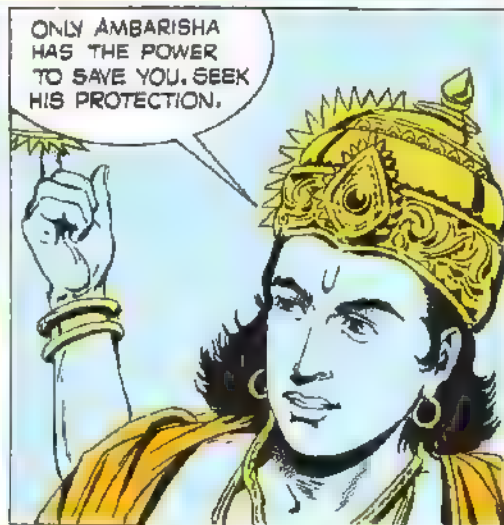
DURVASA RUSHED TO LORD VISHNU.

O LORD! . HAVE
OFFENDED YOUR
DEVOTEE. PARDON
ME! PROTECT
ME!



O SAGE, HE WHO
EMPLOYS HIS POWER
TO INJURE THE VIRTU-
OUS, INVITES EVIL
UPON HIMSELF.

ONLY AMBARISHA
HAS THE POWER
TO SAVE YOU. SEEK
HIS PROTECTION.



DURVASA RETRACED HIS STEPS TO MADHUVANA.

AMBARISHA,
TAKE PITY ON ME!
CALL OFF THIS
DISCUS!

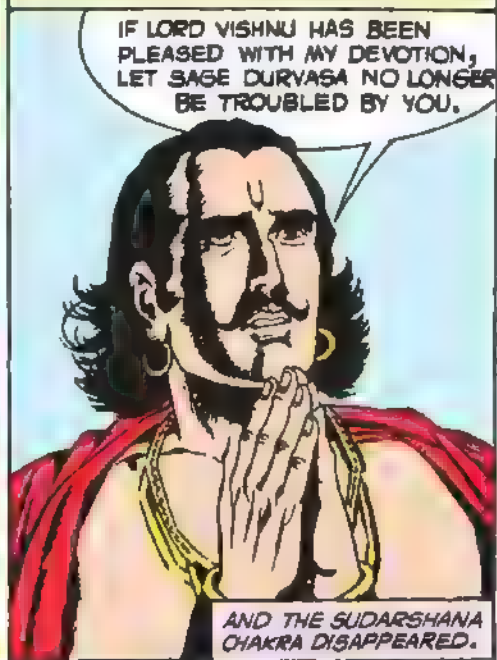


AMBARISHA WAS MOVED BY DURYASA'S FLIGHT.



HAS THE GREAT SAGE BEEN REDUCED TO SUCH A PATHETIC STATE?

HE APPEALED TO SUDARSHANA CHAKRA.



IF LORD VISHNU HAS BEEN PLEASED WITH MY DEVOTION, LET SAGE DURYASA NO LONGER BE TROUBLED BY YOU.

AND THE SUDARSHANA CHAKRA DISAPPEARED.

THE NEXT MOMENT —



AMBARISHA, I AM GRATEFUL TO YOU. YOU HAVE RETURNED CRUELTY WITH KINDNESS.

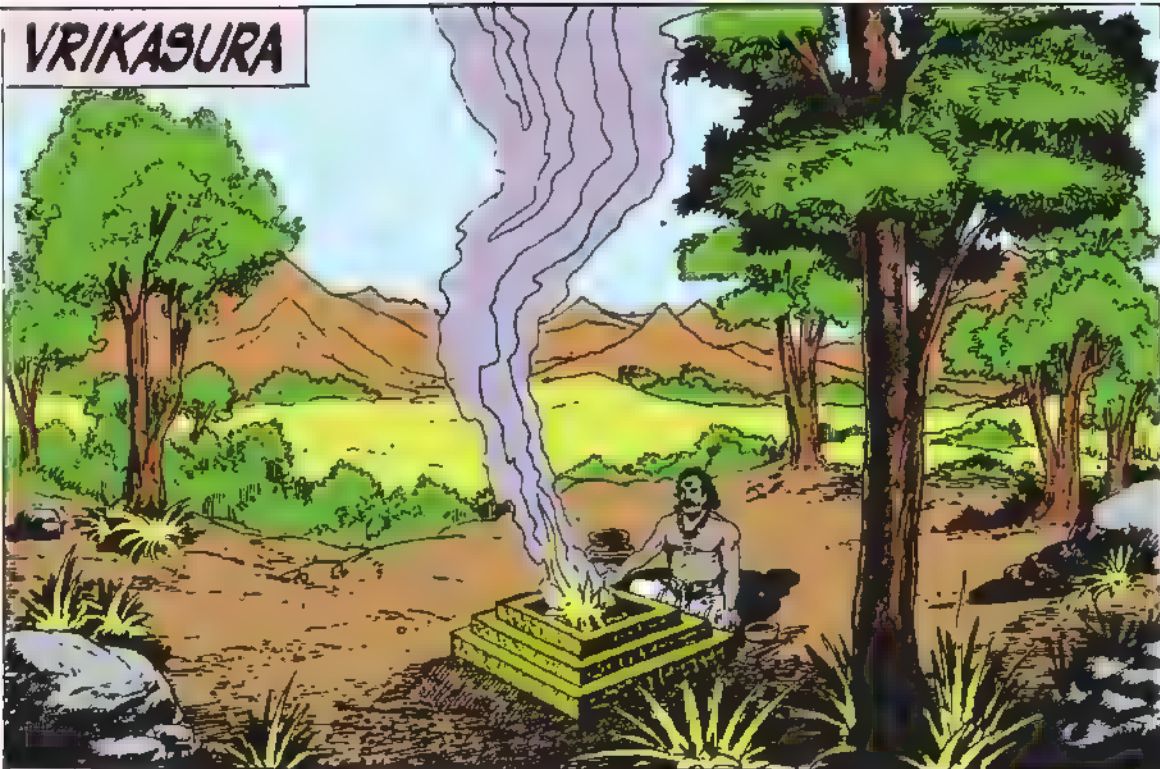
THE DISCUS OF VISHNU WHICH COULD NOT BE CONTROLLED BY EITHER SHIVA OR BRAHMA, RESPECTS YOUR WORDS. WHAT IS THE SECRET OF YOUR POWER?



THE LOVE OF LORD VISHNU.

THUS DID VISHNU DEMONSTRATE HIS LOVE FOR HIS DEVOTEES.

VRIKASURA



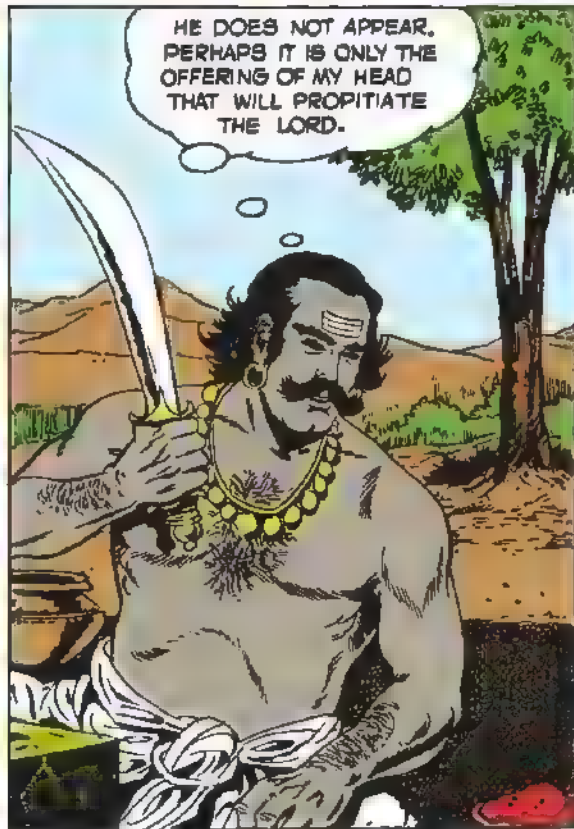
THE FOOLISH BUT MIGHTY ASURA, VRIKA, ONCE DECIDED TO PROPITIATE LORD SHIVA.

HE CUT OFF HIS FLESH AND OFFERED IT TO THE LORD.



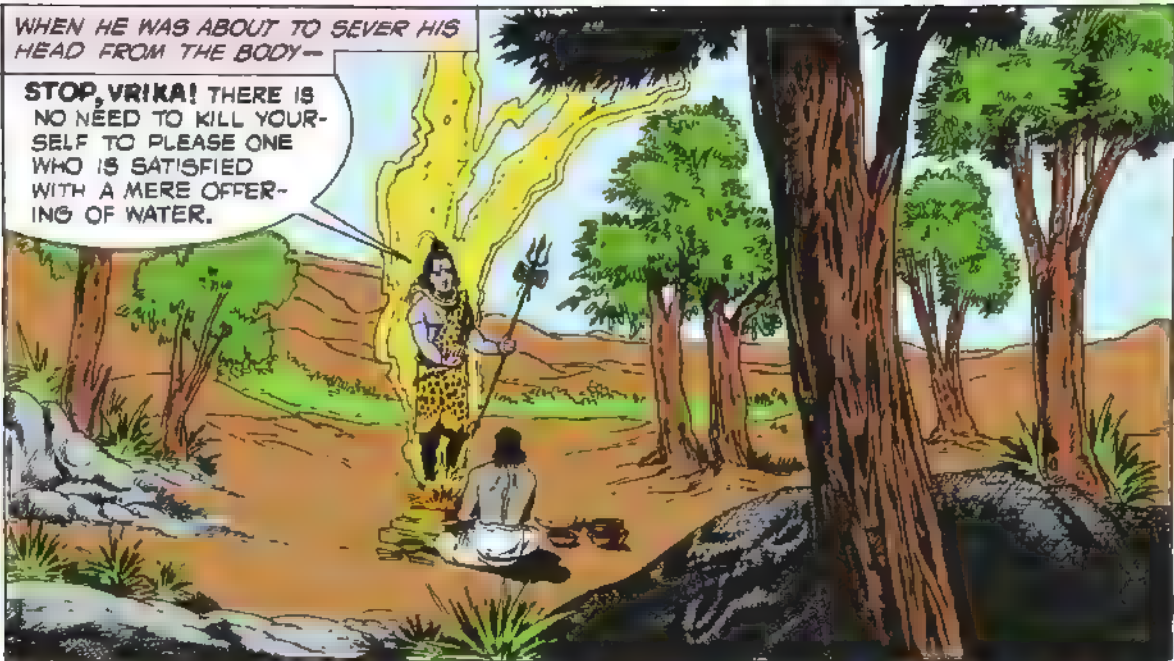
LORD, WITH THIS OFFERING, MAY YOU APPEAR BEFORE ME.

HE DOES NOT APPEAR. PERHAPS IT IS ONLY THE OFFERING OF MY HEAD THAT WILL PROPITIATE THE LORD.



WHEN HE WAS ABOUT TO SEVER HIS
HEAD FROM THE BODY—

STOP, VRIKA! THERE IS
NO NEED TO KILL YOUR-
SELF TO PLEASE ONE
WHO IS SATISFIED
WITH A MERE OFFER-
ING OF WATER.



WHAT IS
THE BOON
YOU SEEK?

I WISH TO
CONQUER THE WORLD.
MAY ANYONE ON
WHOSE HEAD I LAY
MY PALM, DIE.



SO BE
IT.



THE NEXT MOMENT, VRIKA TRIED TO REACH FOR SHIVA.



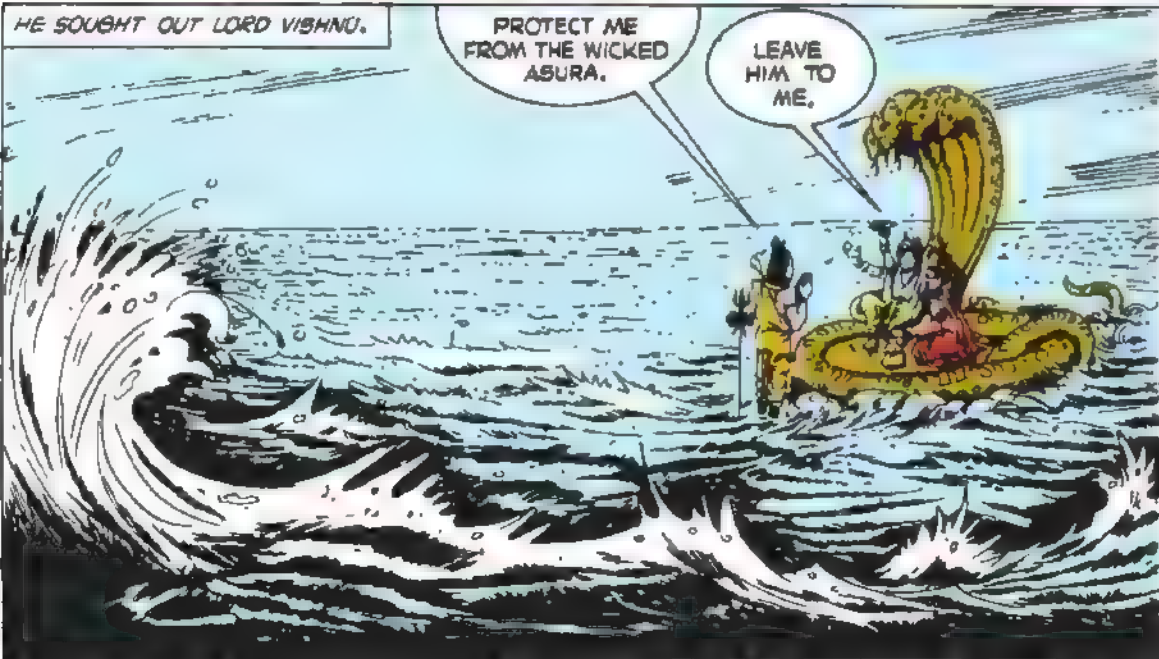
SHIVA BROKE INTO A RUN.



HE SOUGHT OUT LORD VISHNU.

PROTECT ME
FROM THE WICKED
ASURA.

LEAVE
HIM TO
ME.



MEANWHILE, AS VRIKA RAN IN SEARCH OF SHIVA, A YOUNG BRAHMACHARI *MET HIM.

WHERE ARE YOU RUNNING TO? WHOM ARE YOU SEEKING? REST FOR A WHILE. YOU SEEM TIRED.



VRIKA TOLD HIM OF SHIVA'S BOON.

WHEN I WANTED TO TRY IT ON HIM, HE RAN AWAY.

THAT'S BECAUSE THE MOMENT YOU PLACED YOUR PALM ON HIS HEAD, YOU WOULD REALISE THAT HE HAD DUPED YOU.



WHAT! SHIVA DURING A DEVOTEE! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT.



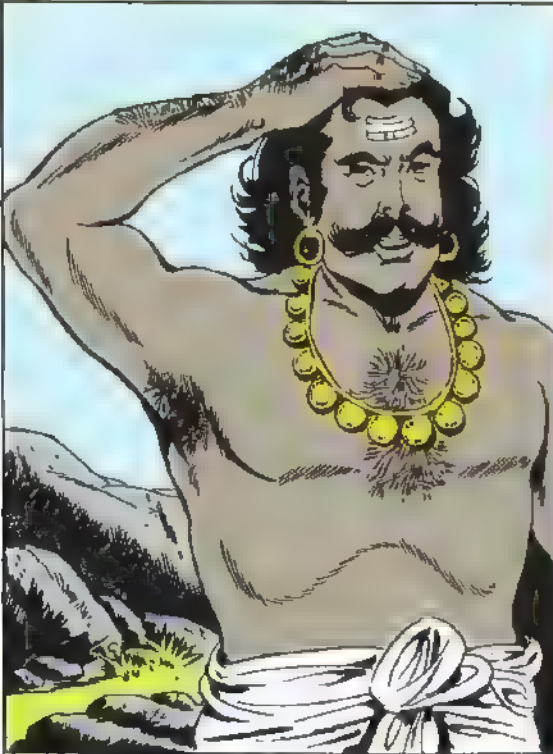
THEN WHY DON'T YOU PLACE YOUR PALM ON YOUR OWN HEAD AND SEE?

A GOOD IDEA!

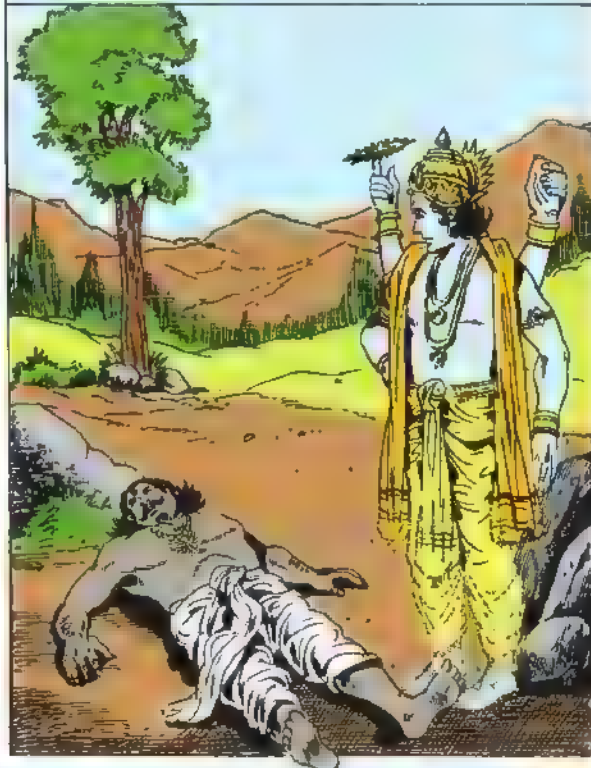


*CELIBATE

WITHOUT STOPPING TO THINK, THE FOOLISH ASURA PLACED HIS PALM ON HIS HEAD.



THE NEXT MOMENT, HE FELL DEAD. THE CLEVER BRAHMACHARI WAS NONE OTHER THAN VISHNU.

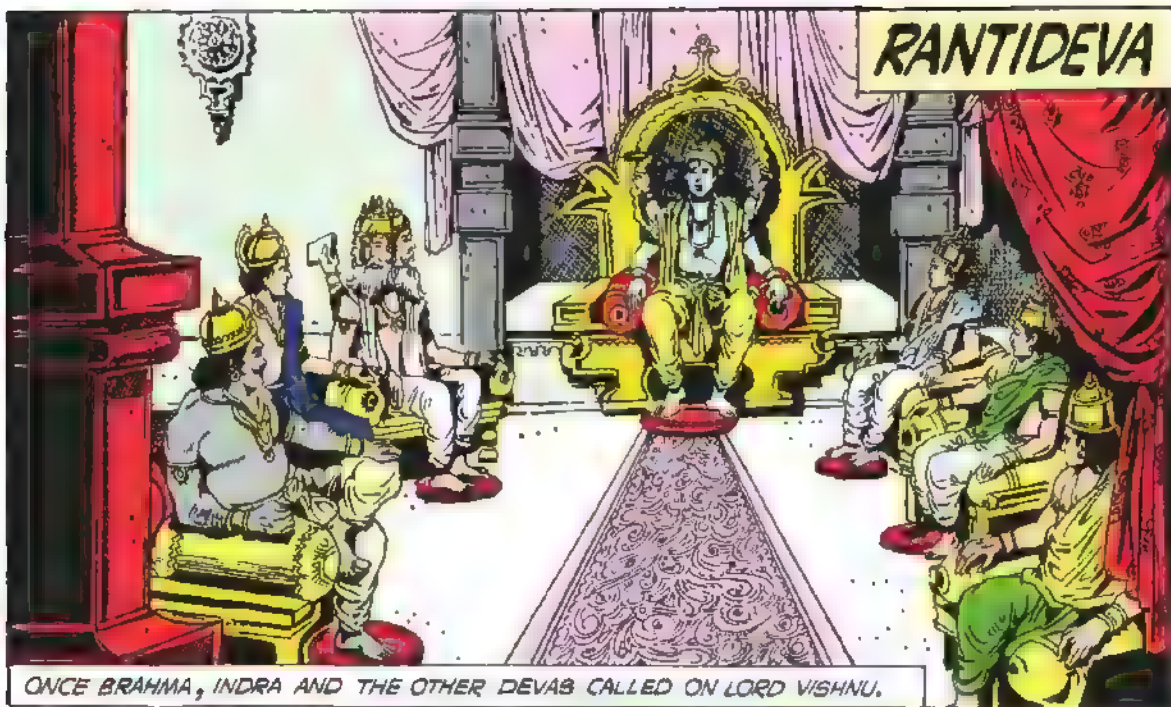


JUST THEN, SHIVA APPEARED.

I AM SORRY THAT THE UNFORTUNATE ASURA HAD TO DIE.

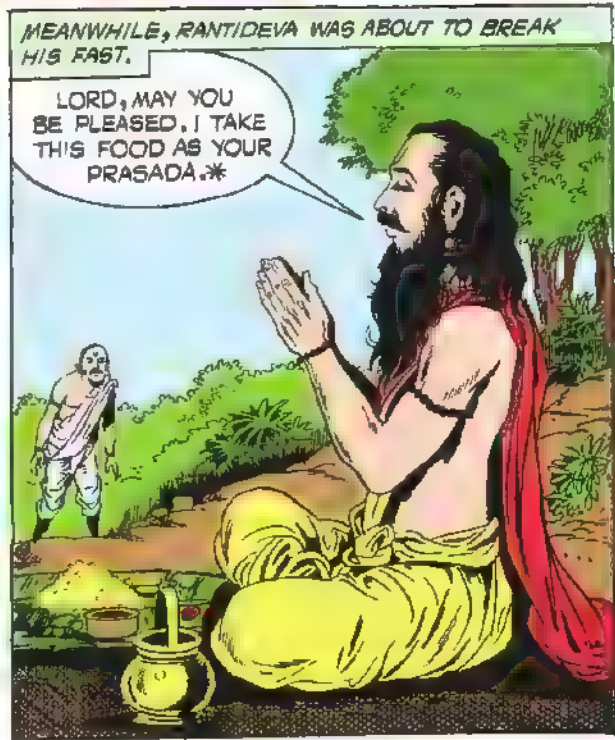
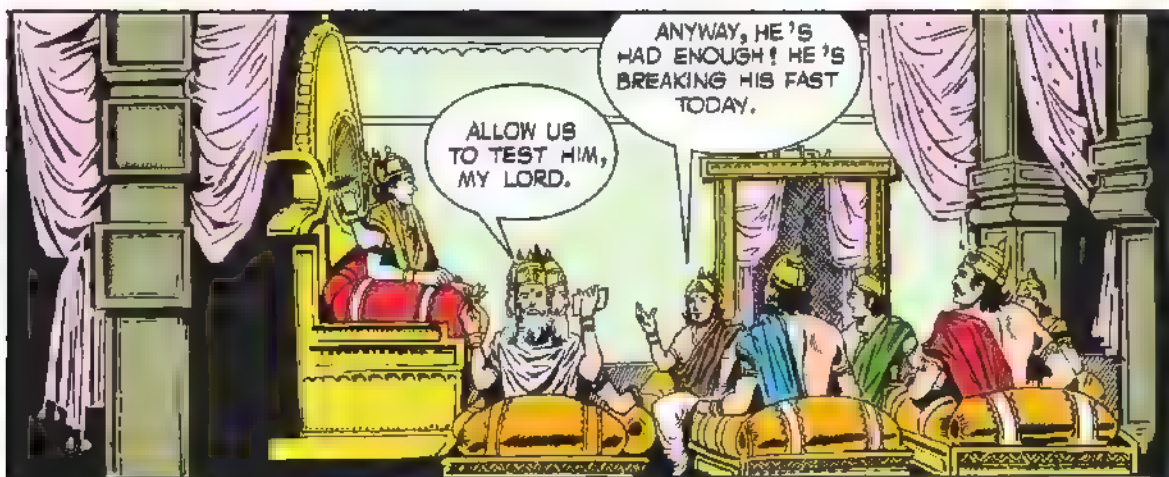
IT WAS INEVITABLE. HE WHO SECURES A BOON TO DESTROY OTHERS SEEKS HIS OWN DESTRUCTION.



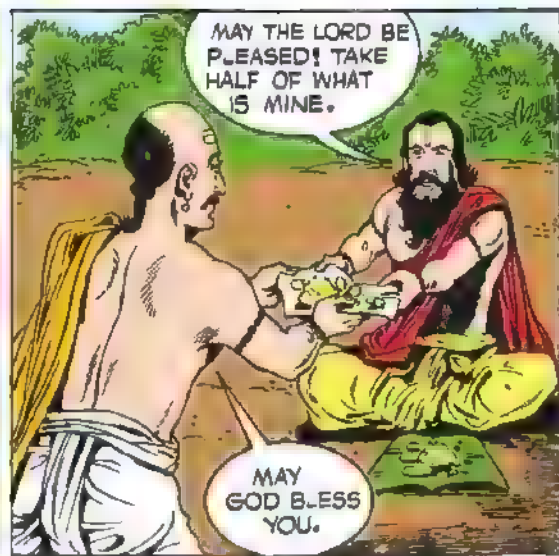


ONCE BRAHMA, INDRA AND THE OTHER DEVAS CALLED ON LORD VISHNU.





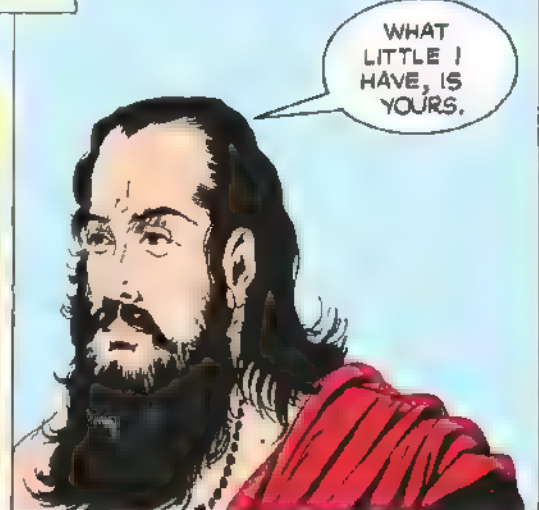
* GOD'S GIFT

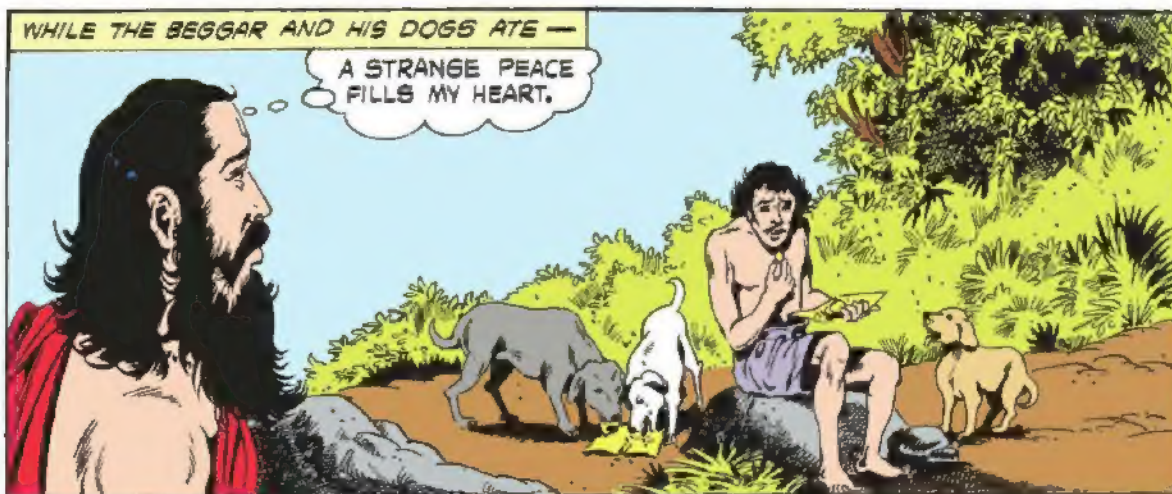


AS THE BRAHMAN WENT AWAY, A FARMER CAME ALONG.

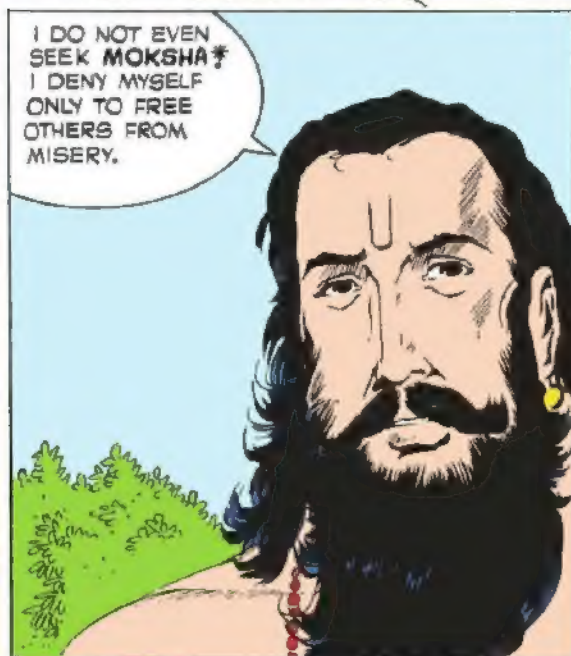


AS RANTIDEVA WAS ABOUT TO EAT WHAT WAS LEFT —





*CELESTIAL BEING



* EMANCIPATION OF THE SOUL



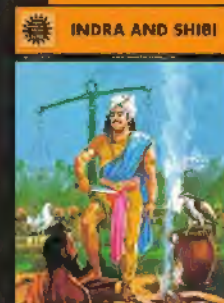
THE NEXT MOMENT, VISHNU AND THE OTHER DEVAS APPEARED BEFORE RANTIDEVA.



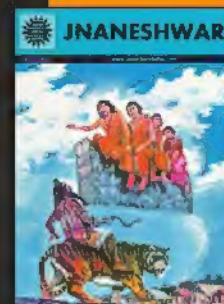
TALES OF VISHNU

Vishnu, they say, is just one of a powerful threesome – the highest lords of the universe. However, though Brahma has created the universe and Shiva can destroy it, it is up to the great god Vishnu to keep all creatures within it well and happy. Always compassionate, he is also the wisest of the trinity. It is he who good-naturedly sorts out the mess the others create. And above all, Vishnu always favours the good and the pure.

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